

CLAIMS

1. A float process for manufacturing glass sheets, in which molten glass is poured onto a liquid support denser than the glass and then the continuous ribbon which forms is advanced toward the downstream end, characterized in that the thickened edges of the ribbon are trimmed continuously in the forming zone.
2. The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the edges are trimmed between the moment when the glass ribbon reaches its maximum width in the float and the moment when the glass ribbon separates from the bath.
3. The process as claimed in either of claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the edges are trimmed at a temperature above the Littleton point of the glass.
4. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the trimming is carried out by means of at least one laser and/or at least one hot knife.
5. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that a jet of gas is directed toward the trimming point at the same time as the trimming is being carried out.
6. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the sheet is lifted at the trimming point so as to break the contact between the glass and the metal bath and to facilitate the trimming.
7. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the glass ribbon is stretched laterally over the surface of the bath, in the forming zone, and it is accompanied in its movement by means of continuous and flexible guiding elements made of a solid material capable of adhering to the molten glass, these elements spreading out the ribbon by means of two spreader fingers, the trimming instrument or instruments being placed just after the spreader fingers.

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8. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 7, characterized in that the speed of the ribbon in the float is kept to less than 10 m/min.

9. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that the ribbon is wound in line.

10. The process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the edges of the ribbon are chemically toughened, in line or after the ribbon has been wound.

11. A plant for implementing the process according to claims 1 to 10, characterized in that it comprises at least one trimming device placed in the forming zone.

12. The plant as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that it has dimensions not exceeding 20 m in length and 4 m in width and produces less than 20 tons of flat glass per day.

13. The application of the process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 10 to the manufacture of sheets of glass with a thickness of less than 2 mm, particularly sheets of film glass.

14. A glass ribbon or sheet obtained by a float process, particularly by the process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that its lateral edges are slightly rounded or have a slight thickening and a slight rib before the rounded edge or the thickening.

15. A roll of glass, obtained in particular by the process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 10, the glass having a thickness of less than 0.7 mm.

16. The roll of glass as claimed in claim 15, characterized in that the ratio of its radius to the thickness of the glass is greater than 1000.

17. The roll of glass as claimed in either of claims 15 and 16, characterized in that it includes inserts between its turns.

18. The roll of glass as claimed in one of claims 15 to 17, characterized in that its edges are chemically toughened.

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19. The use of the film glass, obtained in particular by the process as claimed in one of claims 1 to 10, as protection, or as decoration, or as a carrier or promoter of a function, or as an identifier or seal, or as packaging, or as a storage medium for optical or magnetic data, or as a screen.

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